



BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Questions and Answers Regarding Baltimore Regional Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program Request for Proposals #22V02

November 17, 2021

Question 1: Will the presentation be available?

Answer: Yes, the slides from our August 26 Pre-Proposal Meeting are posted on BMC's RFP page: <https://www.baltometro.org/requests-for-proposals>.

Question 2: How do you find the opportunity areas on the BRHP website?

Answer: You can find a detailed map at <https://brhp.org/opportunity-areas/> or you can search by address at <https://brhp.org/search-tool/>. ****UPDATE**** The "Opportunity Designations (BRHP)" layer on Maryland DHCD's Multifamily Mapper at <https://portal.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/multifamily/index.html> is out-of-date. Please use one of the tools on the brhp.org site above and NOT DHCD's Multifamily Mapper.

Question 3: Are developments in other counties (i.e. Frederick, Montgomery) considered for the voucher program?

Answer: Only developments in the jurisdictions where public housing authorities are contributing vouchers to this program are eligible. Frederick and Montgomery Counties are not in the Baltimore region and are not part of this program.

Question 4: Can the vouchers be stacked with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)? If so, would it be in 2nd position?

Answer: Yes, the vouchers are often used together with LIHTC. The vouchers represent an ongoing monthly rent subsidy, rather than debt, so they are not in any particular position relative to creditors.

Question 5: How are prospective residents referred to the community? If resident referrals are slow, what support can BMC provide to assist us in reaching prospects?

Answer: The Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership (BRHP) will make all referrals, drawing from the Housing Choice Voucher waiting lists of the public housing authorities that are partners in our collaboration. This may be slower than typical leasing because of denial rates of property managers and complying with HUD rules for drawing from voucher waiting lists.

Question 6: How can the funds be used (i.e. planning, design, construction, post-construction, etc.) in the Baltimore Regional Project-Based Voucher Program?

Answer: The funds are received by the owner as a monthly subsidy for tenants living in units that have a project-based voucher attached. They can be used for anything an owner would use rental income for.

Question 7: Do you have any future plans to RFP vouchers for individuals with disabilities?

Answer: No, we are focused on serving families regardless of disability status.

Question 8: We have a multifamily rental development with no project-based subsidy that has been renovated in the last 10 years. No renovations are needed. The projects are fully occupied. Would our projects qualify for the PBV program?

Answer: Existing housing units do qualify under this RFP. Please note that, as stated on page 13 of the RFP, "Vouchers will only be awarded to vacant units or, for existing housing, units that will become available through regular tenant turnover. No application will be approved that includes relocation as a requirement of the proposed Development."

Question 9: On page 13, the RFP notes that *"No more than 25 units or 25 percent of the total units in a single multifamily development, whichever is greater, may receive Vouchers, unless otherwise excepted (e.g. units in a single family building or excepted units in a multifamily project as defined by HUD). This 25 percent cap also applies on a building by building basis in developments that comprise multiple multifamily buildings."* I want to make sure that, for existing housing, this language is only applicable to these new RFP PBVs, not total vouchers in use on the property, including tenant-based vouchers.

Answer: Our understanding is that federal law and HUD rules apply this cap to all project-based vouchers in a development, not just the project-based vouchers from this RFP. It would not apply to tenant-based vouchers. In this RFP we are relying on the standard in the

federal Housing Opportunity through Modernization Act (HOTMA) of 2016 and implementing regulations.

Question 10: On page 13, the RFP notes *“Vouchers will only be awarded to vacant units or, for existing housing, units that will become available through regular tenant turnover. No application will be approved that includes relocation as a requirement of the proposed Development”* – does this practically mean that the unit must be vacant in between RFP application and PBV award?

Answer: No. That text notes that, for existing housing, units can be filled through regular tenant turnover.

Question 11: On page 12, the RFP notes a preference *“The Regional PBV Program has a preference for Developments in opportunity areas, as defined by BRHP. Those proposed developments can compete for 20 additional points in scoring than proposals outside those areas.”* – I did a quick check and it looks like Sharp-Leadenhall is “Non-Opportunity” – are most projects applying for the RFP in Opportunity Areas?

Answer: You are correct that Sharp-Leadenhall is currently not in a BRHP opportunity area. So far in this program’s history, most applications and all of our awards have been for developments in BRHP opportunity areas.

Question 12: On page 12, the RFP does not explicitly outline the UFAS requirements – instead, it notes *“further information on accessibility requirements is available upon request.”* Please supply all relevant accessibility requirements.

Answer: That text in the RFP applies to “accessible and adaptable apartments and the owner’s obligation to make reasonable accommodations for disabled residents,” rather than Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). More information on reasonable accommodations and modifications is available at:

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/reasonable_accommodations_and_modifications. More information on UFAS requirements is available at:

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/disabilities/accessibility.

Question 13: It seemed from reading the RFP that even though you can apply for locations that are not an opportunity area, it is unlikely that you will be awarded any vouchers. Do you have a sense of what % of vouchers (if any) may be awarded outside of opportunity areas?

Answer: We cannot predict what percentage of vouchers may be awarded outside of opportunity areas. Please review the Selection Criteria portion of the RFP.

Question 14: I didn't see anything about timing of availability of the units. Is there any? We are probably 16+ months from having units ready for occupancy.

Answer: There is no requirement for when units will become available. Our Financial Plan threshold criterion is designed to ensure that the development is viable within a reasonable period of time. Low Income Housing Tax Credit developments often take two years or longer from our award to becoming available.

Question 15: Would you entertain single-unit, scattered-site submissions?

Answer: No. On page 13, the RFP says, "Applicants must request a minimum of five (5) Vouchers."

Question 15: I believe on the call, you said that at least 25% of the PBV units need to be rented at 50% AMI, correct? Also, does that number round up? For example, if we request 25 PBVs, 25% of that would be 6.25 units. Would this round up to 7 units at 50% AMI?

Answer: Yes, for the purposes of income-targeting for an application for support from Maryland DHCD, from page 13 of the RFP, "At least 25 percent of units for which Vouchers are requested must be targeted no lower than 50 percent of AMI. These must include a unit size mix similar to the request as a whole." Since the threshold is "at least" 25 percent, the number of units must round up.

Question 16: We want to better understand Appendix C for non-opportunity area proposals. Appendix C is more qualitative in nature than the scoring portion on pages 22-24 (the RFP responder needs to only "respond" to the Appendix C selection standards in Appendix C). Is there a way to know how many points each category of Appendix C is worth to make sure we can get to the necessary 45 points?

Answer: For developments that are not located in BRHP opportunity areas, responses on Appendix C are worth up to 12 points, as described on page 22 of the RFP. You are correct that this scoring is more qualitative in nature. As noted on page 15 of the RFP, responses on Appendix C are designed to help the Selection Panel evaluate if a proposal meets HUD's regulations regarding site and neighborhood standards. As referred to on page 23, meeting those standards is a requirement for an award. In addition, for proposals outside of BRHP opportunity areas, as noted on page 15, we are particularly interested in "jobs and high quality public education that are accessible to the community and to residents of the proposed Development" and in "investments that will be coordinated with the Development" to bring those to the area.

Question 17: Would units that are restricted to households earning 60-80% AMI meet the definition of “market rate” in the RFP, or must “market rate” units have no income restrictions?

Answer: Market-rate units must have no income restrictions.